WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. An information providing method of providing information to a user, characterized by comprising:

the input step of inputting a code;

5 the extraction step of searching a first database for first information corresponding to the input code and extracting the first information;

the attachment step of, when a predetermined condition is satisfied, searching a second database for

10 second information, extracting the second information, and attaching the extracted second information to the first information; and

the step of outputting the first information or the first information having the second information.

15 2. The method according to claim 1, characterized in that the input step comprises inputting the code through a terminal apparatus connected to a network.

3. The method according to claim 1, characterized by further comprising the printing step of printing the output

20 information.

4. The method according to claim 1, characterized in that the first information contains information with which the user himself/herself can expect contents or type of the first information.

25 5. The method according to claim 1, characterized in that the second information contains arbitrary

advertisement information.

6.   The method according to claim 1, characterized in that the predetermined condition is a condition that attachment of the second information is permitted in

5   addition to the first information corresponding to the input code.

7.   The method according to claim 1, characterized in that the predetermined condition is a condition that there is a margin for printing the second information in addition

10   to the first information.

8.   The method according to claim 1, characterized in that the predetermined condition is a condition that a type of information registered by the user in advance is detected in the attachment step as the second information.

15   9.   The method according to claim 1, characterized in that the first database stores a plurality of information extractable as the first information each of which has a code, and the second database stores a plurality of advertisement information extractable as the second

20   information each of which has a code.

10.   The method according to claim 1, characterized in that a plurality of information provider servers each having the first database and the second database, and a management server for systematically controlling said

25   plurality of information provider servers are connected through a network.

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11.　　The method according to claim 10, characterized in that said information provider server is included in said management server.

12.　　The method according to claim 10, characterized in that said management server has a first table which stores a relationship between a code of each first information and said information provider server storing the first information, and

the extraction step comprises specifying said information provider server storing the first information by looking up the first table, searching the first database of said information provider server for the first information corresponding to the input code, and extracting the first information.

13.　　The method according to claim 10, characterized in that said management server has a second table which stores a relationship between a code of each second information and said information provider server storing the second information, and

the attachment step comprises, when the predetermined condition is satisfied, specifying said information provider server storing the second information by looking up the second table, searching the second database of said information provider server for the second information, extracting the second information, and attaching the extracted second information to the first

information.

14.   The method according to claim 10, characterized by further comprising the first registration step of registering the first information in the first database.

5   15.   The method according to claim 14, characterized in that the first registration step comprises the storage step of storing the registered first information together with a code for identifying the registered first information.

16.   The method according to claim 15, characterized in

10   that a server identifier for discriminating one information provider server from the remaining information provider servers is assigned in advance to each of said plurality of information provider servers, and

the storage step comprises storing the registered

15   first information in said information provider server together with a code including the server identifier of said information provider server and an information identifier for discriminating the registered first information from the remaining information in said information provider

20   server.

17.   The method according to claim 14, characterized in that the first registration step comprises

the image input step of inputting an original image,

the step of sending the input original image to the

25   first database, and

the step of giving a code to be attached to the

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original image.

18.   The method according to claim 14, characterized in that the first registration step comprises

the character information input step of inputting character information,

the step of sending the input character information to the first database, and

the step of giving a code to be attached to the character information.

19.   The method according to claim 14, characterized by further comprising the first change step of changing the first information registered in the first database.

20.   The method according to claim 14, characterized by further comprising the deleting step of deleting the first information registered in the first database.

21.   The method according to claim 1, characterized by further comprising the second registration step of registering the second information in the second database.

22.   The method according to claim 21, characterized in that the second registration step comprises the storage step of storing the registered second information together with a code for identifying the registered second information.

23.   The method according to claim 2, characterized in that said terminal apparatus stores terminal specification information associated with specifications of said

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terminal apparatus in advance,

the input step comprises inputting the terminal specification information together with the code, and

the attachment step comprises determining using the

5   terminal specification information whether the predetermined condition is satisfied.

24.   The method according to claim 1, characterized by further comprising the third registration step of registering in advance, in units of users, user profile

10   information used to determine whether the predetermined condition is satisfied.

25.   The method according to claim 24, characterized in that the input step comprises inserting an identifier for identifying the user into the code and inputting the code

15   containing the user identifier for identifying the user, and

the attachment step comprises specifying a corresponding user profile on the basis of the received user identifier, searching for the second information

20   corresponding to the user profile, extracting the second information, and attaching the extracted second information to the first information.

26.   A mail extraction method of extracting mail addressed to a user from a mail server, characterized by comprising:

25   the step of sending an input user identifier to said mail server;

the extraction step of extracting mail selected by the user from said mail server;

the determination step of determining whether another information corresponding to the user is to be

5   searched for and extracted;

the attachment step of, upon determining that the another information corresponding to the user is to be extracted, extracting the another information and attaching the information to the mail;

10   the step of outputting the mail having the another information; and

the printing step of printing the output mail.

27.   The method according to claim 26, characterized by further comprising the deleting step of, when printing is

15   ended in the printing step, deleting the printed mail from said mail server.

28.   The method according to claim 26, characterized by further comprising the input step of inputting the user identifier.

20   29.   An information providing system for providing information to a user, characterized by comprising:

input means for inputting a code;

extraction means for searching a first database for first information corresponding to the input code and

25   extracting the first information;

attachment means for, when a predetermined condition

is satisfied, searching a second database for second information, extracting the second information, and attaching the extracted second information to the first information; and

5   output means for outputting the first information or the first information having the second information.

30.   The system according to claim 29, characterized in that said system has a terminal apparatus connected to a network, and said input means inputs the code from said

10 terminal apparatus through a network.

31.   The system according to claim 29, characterized in that said system has a terminal apparatus connected to a network, and said terminal apparatus comprises printing means for printing the output information.

15 32.   The system according to claim 29, characterized in that the first information contains information with which the user himself/herself can expect contents or type of the first information.

33.   The system according to claim 29, characterized in

20 that the second information contains arbitrary advertisement information.

34.   The system according to claim 29, characterized in that the predetermined condition is a condition that attachment of the second information is permitted in

25 addition to the first information corresponding to the input code.

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35.   The system according to claim 27, characterized in that the predetermined condition is a condition that there is a margin for printing the second information in addition to the first information.

5   36.   The system according to claim 29, characterized in that the predetermined condition is a condition that a type of information registered by the user in advance is detected by said attachment means as the second information.

37.   The system according to claim 29, characterized in 10   that the first database stores a plurality of information extractable as the first information each of which has a code, and the second database stores a plurality of advertisement information extractable as the second information each of which has a code.

15   38.   The system according to claim 29, characterized in that a plurality of information provider servers each having the first database and the second database, and a management server for systematically controlling said plurality of information provider servers are connected 20   through a network.

39.   The system according to claim 38, characterized in that said information provider server is included in said management server.

40.   The system according to claim 38, characterized in 25   that said management server has a first table which stores a relationship between a code of each first information and

said information provider server storing the first information, and

said extraction means specifies said information provider server storing the first information by looking up the first table, searches the first database of said information provider server for the first information corresponding to the input code, and extracts the first information.

41. The system according to claim 38, characterized in that said management server has a second table which stores a relationship between a code of each second information and said information provider server storing the second information, and

said attachment means specifies, when the predetermined condition is satisfied, said information provider server storing the second information by looking up the second table, searches the second database of said information provider server for the second information, extracts the second information, and attaches the extracted second information to the first information.

42. The system according to claim 38, characterized by further comprising first registration means for registering the first information in the first database.

43. The system according to claim 42, characterized in that said first registration means comprises storage means for storing the registered first information together with

a code for identifying the registered first information.

44.   The system according to claim 43, characterized in
that a server identifier for discriminating one information
provider server from the remaining information provider
5   servers is assigned in advance to each of said plurality
of information provider servers, and

said storage means stores the registered first
information in said information provider server together
with a code including the server identifier of said
10   information provider server and an information identifier
for discriminating the registered first information from
the remaining information in said information provider
server.

45.   The system according to claim 42, characterized in
15   that said first registration means comprises

image input means for inputting an original image,

means for sending the input original image to the
first database, and

code giving means for giving a code to be attached
20   to the original image.

46.   The system according to claim 45, characterized in
that said system comprises a terminal apparatus having a
scanner, and said information provider server having the
first database, which are connected through a network,

25   said image input means comprises said scanner, and
said information provider server has said code giving

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means.

47. The system according to claim 42, characterized in that said first registration means comprises

character information input means for inputting
character information,

means for sending the input character information to the first database, and

code giving means for giving a code to be attached to the character information.

48. The system according to claim 47, characterized in that said system comprises a terminal apparatus having external storage means, and said information provider server having the first database, which are connected through a network,

said character information input means inputs the character information from a storage medium supplied to said external storage means, and

said information provider server has said code giving means.

49. The system according to claim 42, characterized by further comprising first change means for changing the first information registered in the first database.

50. The system according to claim 42, characterized by further comprising deleting means for deleting the first information registered in the first database.

51. The system according to claim 29, characterized by

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further comprising second registration means for
registering the second information in the second database.

52.   The system according to claim 51, characterized in
that said second registration means comprises storage means
for storing the registered second information together with
a code for identifying the registered second information.

53.   The system according to claim 30, characterized in
that said terminal apparatus stores terminal specification
information associated with specifications of said
terminal apparatus in advance,

said input means inputs the terminal specification
information together with the code, and

said attachment means determines using the terminal
specification information whether the predetermined
condition is satisfied.

54.   The system according to claim 29, characterized by
further comprising third registration means for
registering in advance, in units of users, user profile
information used to determine whether the predetermined
condition is satisfied.

55.   The system according to claim 54, characterized in
that said input means inserts an identifier for identifying
the user into the code and inputs the code containing the
user identifier for identifying the user, and

said attachment means specifies a corresponding user
profile on the basis of the received user identifier,

searches for the second information corresponding to the user profile, extracts the second information, and attaches the extracted second information to the first information.

56. A mail extraction system for extracting mail addressed to a user from a mail server, characterized by comprising:

means for sending an input user identifier to said mail server;

means for extracting mail selected by the user from said mail server;

determination means for determining whether another information corresponding to the user is to be searched for and extracted;

attachment means for, upon determining that the another information corresponding to the user is to be extracted, extracting the another information and attaching the information to the mail;

output means for outputting the mail having the another information; and

printing means for printing the output mail.

57. The system according to claim 56, characterized by further comprising deleting means for, when printing is ended by said printing means, deleting the printed mail from said mail server.

58. The system according to claim 57, characterized by further comprising input means for inputting the user

identifier.

59.   A terminal apparatus comprising said scanner of claim 46, said input means of claim 30, and said printing means of claim 31.

5   60.   A computer-readable storage medium which stores an information providing program for providing information to a user, characterized by comprising:

the input step of inputting a code;

the extraction step of searching a first database for

10 first information corresponding to the input code and extracting the first information;

the attachment step of, when a predetermined condition is satisfied, searching a second database for second information, extracting the second information, and

15 attaching the extracted second information to the first information; and

the step of outputting the first information or the first information having the second information.

61.   The medium according to claim 60, characterized in

20 that the input step comprises inputting the code through a terminal apparatus connected to a network.

62.   The medium according to claim 60, characterized by further comprising the printing step of printing the output information.

25 63.   The medium according to claim 60, characterized in that the first information contains information with which

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the user himself/herself can expect contents or type of the
first information.

64.   The medium according to claim 60, characterized in
that the second information contains arbitrary

5   advertisement information.

65.   The medium according to claim 60, characterized in
that the predetermined condition is a condition that
attachment of the second information is permitted in
addition to the first information corresponding to the

10   input code.

66.   The medium according to claim 62, characterized in
that the predetermined condition is a condition that there
is a margin for printing the second information in addition
to the first information.

15   67.   The medium according to claim 60, characterized in
that the predetermined condition is a condition that a type
information registered by the user in advance is detected
in the attachment step as the second information.

68.   The medium according to claim 60, characterized in

20   that the first database is caused to store a plurality of
information extractable as the first information each of
which has a code, and the second database is caused to store
a plurality of advertisement information extractable as the
second information each of which has a code.

25   69.   The medium according to claim 60, characterized in
that said program is applied in a plurality of information

provider servers each having the first database and the second database, and a management server for systematically controlling said plurality of information provider servers, which are connected through a network.

5 70.   The medium according to claim 69, characterized in that said information provider server is included in said management server.

71.   The medium according to claim 69, characterized in that said management server has a first table which stores

10 a relationship between a code of each first information and said information provider server storing the first information, and

the extraction step comprises specifying said information provider server storing the first information

15 by looking up the first table, searching the first database of said information provider server for the first information corresponding to the input code, and extracting the first information.

72.   The medium according to claim 69, characterized in that said management server has a second table which stores

20 a relationship between a code of each second information and said information provider server storing the second information, and

the attachment step comprises, when the

25 predetermined condition is satisfied, specifying said information provider server storing the second information

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by looking up the second table, searching the second database of said information provider server for the second information, extracting the second information, and attaching the extracted second information to the first

5 information.

73.   The medium according to claim 69, characterized by further comprising the first registration step of registering the first information in the first database.

74.   The medium according to claim 73, characterized in

10 that the first registration step comprises the storage step of storing the registered first information together with a code for identifying the registered first information.

75.   The medium according to claim 74, characterized in that a server identifier for discriminating one information

15 provider server from the remaining information provider servers is assigned in advance to each of said plurality of information provider servers, and

the storage step comprises storing the registered first information in said information provider server

20 together with a code including the server identifier of said information provider server and an information identifier for discriminating the registered first information from the remaining information in said information provider server.

25 76.   The medium according to claim 73, characterized in that the first registration step comprises

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the image input step of inputting an original image,

the step of sending the input original image to the first database, and

the step of giving a code to be attached to the

5   original image.

77.   The medium according to claim 73, characterized in that the first registration step comprises

the character information input step of inputting character information,

10   the step of sending the input character information to the first database, and

the step of giving a code to be attached to the character information.

78.   The medium according to claim 73, characterized by

15   further comprising the first change step of changing the first information registered in the first database.

79.   The medium according to claim 73, characterized by further comprising the deleting step of deleting the first information registered in the first database.

20   80.   The medium according to claim 60, characterized by further comprising the second registration step of registering the second information in the second database.

81.   The medium according to claim 80, characterized in that the second registration step comprises the storage

25   step of storing the registered second information together with a code for identifying the registered second

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information.

82. The medium according to claim 61, characterized in that said terminal apparatus stores terminal specification information associated with specifications of said

5 terminal apparatus in advance,

the input step comprises inputting the terminal specification information together with the code, and

the attachment step comprises determining using the terminal specification information whether the

10 predetermined condition is satisfied.

83. The medium according to claim 60, characterized by further comprising the third registration step of registering in advance, in units of users, user profile information used to determine whether the predetermined

15 condition is satisfied.

84. The medium according to claim 83, characterized in that the input step comprises inserting an identifier for identifying the user into the code and inputting the code containing the user identifier for identifying the user,

20 and

the attachment step comprises specifying a corresponding user profile on the basis of the received user identifier, searching for the second information corresponding to the user profile, extracting the second

25 information, and attaching the extracted second information to the first information.

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85.   A computer-readable storage medium which stores a
mail extraction program for extracting mail addressed to
a user from a mail server, characterized by comprising:

the step of sending an input user identifier to said
5   mail server;

the extraction step of extracting mail selected by
the user from said mail server;

the determination step of determining whether
another information corresponding to the user is to be
10   searched for and extracted;

the attachment step of, upon determining that the
another information corresponding to the user is to be
extracted, extracting the another information and
attaching the information to the mail;

15   the step of outputting the mail having the another
information; and

the printing step of controlling to print the output
mail.

86.   The medium according to claim 85, characterized by
20   further comprising the deleting step of, when printing is
ended in the printing step, deleting the printed mail from
said mail server.

87.   The medium according to claim 85, characterized by
further comprising the input step of inputting the user
25   identifier.